



## College of Arts and Sciences

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**Subject:** Proposition to Rename IDS to BEST and to relocate BEST to HEST

This memo is to summarize the recommendations from the College of Arts & Sciences concerning the proposition to

1. Rename the Interdisciplinary Study Department (IDS) to the Department of Border and Ethnic Studies (BEST)
2. Relocate the department from the College of Arts & Sciences to the College of Health, Education, and Social Transformation

The college collected two sets of recommendations as our interpretation of ARP 2.15 (supported by Provost Campbell and under advice by the Faculty Senate leadership):

- Anonymous vote by the faculty in the College
- Vote by the Department Heads in the College (as representing the administrative and leadership structure of the college).

The results of the votes are as follows:

- Faculty: 81 faculty returned a vote:
  - 60 in favor of the proposition
  - 10 opposed to the proposition
  - 11 explicitly abstained from voting
- Department Heads: 17 department heads voted, as follows
  - 14 in favor of the proposition
  - 1 opposed to the proposition
  - 1 abstained
  - 1 in favor of the renaming but opposed to the relocation

We also provided the faculty with the opportunity to submit comments on the proposition, and all of the comments are listed below (one comment was signed and I removed the signature to preserve anonymity):

1. I would like to clarify why I vote no. In principle I see a lot of value in the proposition, but I am against how the entire process was undertaken. The process has alienated folks from both colleges and it is not how such moves should be undertaken. A&S fully supported the creation of the program and did much of the heavy lifting to get it in place. Without such support this program would have never gotten off the ground. To now grant such a move under these circumstances will set a bad precedent for the university.

2. I am a faculty sponsor on this bill, and I strongly support this reorganization. I have worked with the BEST faculty for years, and this reorganization will position BEST faculty to more easily secure external funding to support their important work advancing the recent K-12 social studies curriculum that the State of New Mexico and Las Cruces Public Schools is implementing and advancing social justice.
3. It is good to eliminate IDS because it was never interdisciplinary in the first place.
4. If BEST moves to HEST, how to combine with other departments? As mentioned in previous plans of HEST, departments will combine as a school. However, there are still remaining uncompleted plans. For instance, for saving budgets, there is no department head. BEST was a program, which recently became a department. They are willing to return to a program again based on HEST's plan? Is it really necessary to relocate? HEST's reorganization would be the first, wouldn't it?
5. The proposal was very convincing of the need for this move. Additionally, "Interdisciplinary Studies" was too vague of a term to be meaningful, even with the thoughtful programs and faculty it housed.
6. The whole process has moved so far down the road that it would be impossible to pull it back, even though administrative reorganization came about unconventionally. BEST seems more focused on K-12 teaching and contributions to teacher training as a remedy to Yazzie v Martinez. Situation in HEST rather than A and S makes sense for the curriculum they propose.
7. It seems to me that this new department is a much better fit in the College of Arts and Sciences. The new college, meanwhile, seems incoherent to me and I suspect is illegible to those outside NMSU. I advocate for BEST's remaining in the College of Arts and Sciences.
8. BEST needs a proper environment to attract funding, sponsor research, and fulfill its mission. The change is critical and I support it wholeheartedly.
9. I strongly support the reorganization of the BEST program as outlined in this proposal, but I am concerned about the move to HEST. I think BEST would better remain as part of A&S. Perhaps this proposition could be reformulated to provide that as an option for voting?
10. Given the Deans of both relevant colleges expressing support, it seems ok for this to happen. It's a shame we could not keep that program here in A&S, where it belongs.
11. More time is needed. Some statements submitted in support of the proposition have been questioned in the meantime. I hope to learn more about those arguments against the proposed relocation at the senate meeting. I have not made a final decision on my vote at this point.
12. While I support the creation of a BEST department, I believe it would better remain in A&S. Most (all?) faculty in the new Dept come from A&S departments. BEST currently has one academic program, a graduate certificate, whose current students are mostly from A&S as well. Opportunities for collaboration will remain here in the College, as three departments are currently hiring in related areas (to my knowledge). I do not (yet?) see compelling enough reasons to move the Department to HEST, given all these factors.
13. On Indigenous Lands and as HSI/MSI, I fully support this relocation. BEST as a department will provide the foundation to prepare academic leaders with an intellectually rigorous and interdisciplinary approach that supports the future of New Mexico and the Native Nations. Borderland and Ethnic Studies are extremely important now given the current social and political climate, such as the 2018 ruling in Martinez/Yazzie, the May 18 unanimous vote by the Las Cruces Public School Board to approve its Equity Policy that includes Ethnic Studies curriculum, statewide efforts with the NMPED to revise social studies standards, and at the national level-initiatives by the federal administration to activate racial justice and implement equitable policies that address poverty, discrimination, and the historical oppression of various groups in our country. BEST as a department is necessary to continue working toward a healing shift in education and to advance all communities within the College of HEST.

14. This is wonderful news for our campus. What a powerful and much needed contribution this program will make to NMSU's mission.
15. It would be good someday to truly have a mechanism for interdisciplinary work.
16. It's well planned and needs to make this move.
17. Without the context of the movement that is already underway and that has been approved by faculty senate's leadership, Dean Pontelli, Provost Campbell, and various VPs, I find this survey a very inadequate and careless way to seek faculty input. The department already exists, if only without name and faculty lines have already been allocated, so what's meant by asking about reorganization? Also, Etchnic? Careless.

Sincerely,



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